
amar chitra katha
No. 147 Rs. 4.00
Krishna and Jarasandha
LONG, L
BRIHAD.
BEAUT.
THE STORY OF HOW THE INVINCIBLE MAGA
EMPEROR WAS VANQU HED

Jarasandha was the emperor of Aryavarta (north India) at the time the Pandavas were ruling at Indraprastha. Most of the kings of North India acknowledged his suzerainty out of fear. Many of those who did not, had been imprisoned by him. To establish the supremacy of the Pandavas it was necessary to subdue Jarasandha.

Though Jarasandha was considered invincible, he had a vital flaw and Krishna knew this. Jarasandha was the split-personality, in a purely physical sense. He was born split and it was the (black) magical touch of a sorceress that joined the two halves to complete the man. This joint was at once the source of his strength and his weakness.

Mighty men of mythology, be they of the East, or of the West, were always characterised by a vital flaw which in reverse, would turn out to be a vital asset. Karna's Kavacha (armour) and Achilles' Heels are classic examples. The secret of the heroes' strength often remained locked in this dual nature of their gifts. Only one who knew the secret could vanquish them. Jarasandha's weak point was known only to Krishna. How he brings about the fall of the mighty and evil emperor is narrated in this Amar Chitra Katha, based on the Bhagawat Purana and the Mahabharata.

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KRISHNA AND JARASANDHA




O RISHI, WHAT USE HAVE I FOR A BOON? I AM ABOUT TO RENOUNCE THE KINGDOM AND GO INTO THE FORESTS. CURSED AS I AM, I HAVE NO SON.
THE RISHI CLOSED HIS EYES. SUDDENLY —
LET YOUR WIFE EAT THIS AND OBTAIN A SON.
AS BRIHADRATHA WALKED AWAY WITH THE MANGO —
I CANNOT GIVE THE FRUIT TO ONE AND MAKE THE OTHER UNHAPPY. THEY SHALL EACH HAVE HALF OF IT.
AND THE KING DIVIDED THE MANGO BETWEEN HIS WIVES.
BUT WHEN THE QUEENS DELIVERED, THEY HAD ONLY HALF A BABY EACH.
ALAS ! I SHOULD HAVE LET YOU EAT THE WHOLE FRUIT.
NO, SISTER. I SHOULD HAVE LET YOU EAT IT.


IT'S TOO LATE NOW. WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THESE?
LET'S CAST THEM OFF. WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?
SO THE MIDWIVES CARRIED THE TWO HALVES AND THREW THEM INTO THE BACKYARD OF THE QUEENS' APARTMENTS.
A FEW HOURS LATER, THE RAKSHASI, JARA, WHO LIVED ON FLESH AND BLOOD, CAME BY.
MM-M-M! HUMAN FLESH! I SMELL HUMAN FLESH!
HER NOSE LED HER TO THE TWO BUNDLES OF FLESH.
WHAT! ONE BODY RENT IN TWO. I'LL JOIN THE HALVES. IT WILL BE EASIER TO CARRY ONE BUNDLE.


THE MOMENT SHE JOINED THE TWO PIECES, THE BABY CAME TO LIFE AND ROARED.
AA-A-AH! GR-R-R-R!
HEARING THE ROAR, THE KING, HIS QUEENS, THE MIDWIVES, THE SERVANTS, ALL CAME RUNNING OUT.
ISN'T THAT THE VIRTUOUS KING WHO LONGED FOR A SON. I WILL GIVE HIM BACK HIS CHILD.
WHEN THEY REACHED HER —
O KING, I, JARA, HAVE SAVED YOUR SON FOR YOU. TAKE HIM.
GOOD LADY, SINCE IT WAS YOU WHO PUT HIM TOGETHER AND MADE HIM COMPLETE, HE SHALL BE NAMED JARASANDHA.

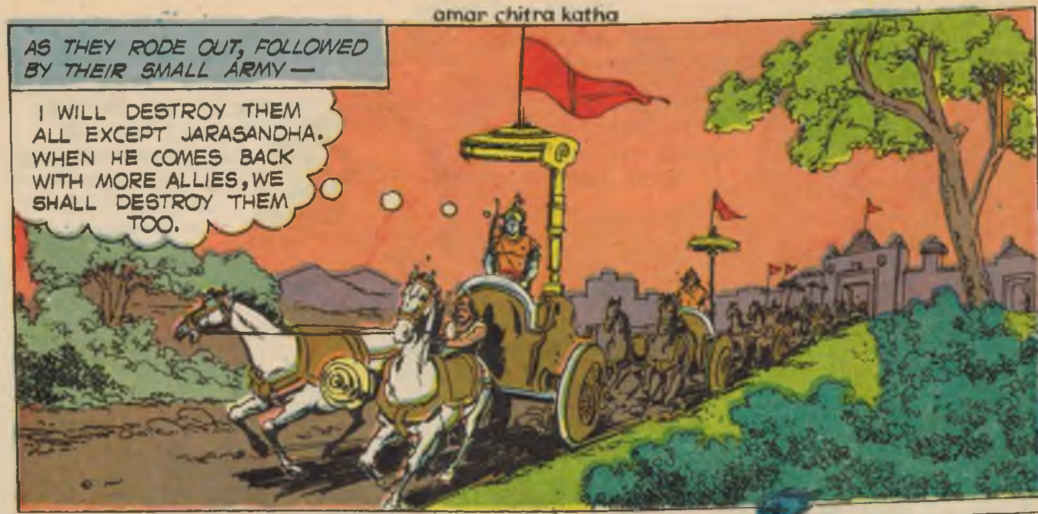


* THE SON OF UGRASENA, KING OF MATHURA


BUT KAMSA WAS AN EVIL KING. HE DEPOSED HIS FATHER AND PERSECUTED HIS OWN SUBJECTS.
WITH THE MIGHTY JARASANDHA AS MY FATHER-IN-LAW, I NEED FEAR NONE. NONE, EXCEPT MY NEPHEW, KRISHNA.
BEFORE KRISHNA WAS BORN, IT HAD BEEN PROPHESIED THAT HE WOULD KILL THE EVIL KAMSA.
FATE AND THE GODS CONSPIRED AGAINST ME AND FOILED MY ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY THE CHILD.
THEY SAY, HE IS LIVING AMONG THE GOPAS* OF BRINDAVAN WITH HIS BROTHER BALARAMA. I SHALL INVITE HIM TO MATHURA AND KILL HIM.
BUT AT THE FATED HOUR, IT WAS KAMSA WHO MET WITH HIS END AT KRISHNA'S HANDS.
UGRASENA WAS RESTORED TO THE THRONE. WHILE ALL MATHURA REJOICED . . .

* COWHERDS


...AT MAGADHA, JARASANDHA WAS INFURIATED WHEN HE SAW HIS WIDOWED DAUGHTERS.
DO NOT WEEP, MY CHILDREN. I SHALL AVENGE THE DEATH OF YOUR HUSBAND.
HE TURNED TO HIS COMMANDER.
INFORM OUR ALLIES! RALLY OUR ARMIES! I SHALL RID THE EARTH OF THAT VILE YADAVA, KRISHNA, AND ALL HIS TRIBE!
A FEW DAYS LATER, KRISHNA'S ELDER BROTHER, BALARAMA CAME TO HIM.
JARASANDHA AND HIS ALLIES HAVE BESIEGED THE CITY.
IT WAS TO BE EXPECTED. LET US GO OUT AND GUAGE THE STRENGTH OF THEIR ARMIES.
AS THEY STOOD SURVEYING THE SCENE, TWO CHARIOTS SUDDENLY DESCENDED FROM THE HEAVENS, FULL OF DIVINE WEAPONS.
LOOK, BALARAMA! CHARIOTS! ARMOUR! WEAPONS!
QUICK! LET US TAKE WITH US THE MEN WE HAVE AND SAVE OUR RACE.


AS THEY RODE OUT, FOLLOWED BY THEIR SMALL ARMY —
I WILL DESTROY THEM ALL EXCEPT JARASANDHA. WHEN HE COMES BACK WITH MORE ALLIES, WE SHALL DESTROY THEM TOO.


THE TWO BROTHERS CONFRONTED JARASANDHA. KRISHNA BLEW HIS CONCH, INVITING THE KING TO BEGIN THE ATTACK.
DO YOU REALLY WANT TO FIGHT? MY ARROWS WILL SEND YOU TO HEAVEN...
THE VALIANT DO NOT BRAG BUT PROVE THEIR MIGHT IN ACTION.


WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD, JARASANDHA AND HIS HUGE ARMY CHARGED.


BUT KRISHNA DREW OUT HIS BOW AND LET FLY HIS ARROWS IN SUCH QUICK SUCCESSION...
...THAT THE FIELD WAS SOON STREWN WITH THE BODIES OF MEN, HORSES, ELEPHANTS AND CHARIOTS.
THE ALLIES AND THEIR ARMIES BEGAN TO FLEE.
MEANWHILE, SWINGING HIS MACE, BALARAMA WHO HAD TAKEN ON JARASANDHA'S OWN ARMY, SOON DESTROYED IT AND...
... SEIZED JARASANDHA.


HE WAS ABOUT TO BIND HIM WITH ROPES, WHEN —
NO, BALARAMA. LET HIM GO. LET US INFORM UGRASENA OF OUR VICTORY AND PRESENT HIM WITH OUR BOOTY.
UTTERLY HUMILIATED, JARASANDHA RETURNED TO GIRIVRAJA, HIS CAPITAL.
I WILL NOT GIVE UP. I WILL GO BACK WITH NEW ARMIES AND TEACH THE YADAVAS A LESSON.
JARASANDHA MADE SEVENTEEN ATTEMPTS TO AVENGE THE DEATH OF HIS SON-IN-LAW AND HIS OWN SUCCESSIVE HUMILIATIONS; AND SEVENTEEN TIMES DID KRISHNA DECIMATE HIS ARMIES, SPARING HIM ALONE.
MEANWHILE, KALAYAVANA, THE INVINCIBLE, WAS BRAGGING ABOUT HIS VALOUR TO SAGE NARADA.
I HAVE FOUGHT AND VANQUISHED MANY. I AM WITHOUT A RIVAL AMONG MEN.
SO ARE THE YADAVA HEROES, KRISHNA AND BALARAMA, THE FOREMOST OF WARRIORS ON THE EARTH'S SURFACE.
THE REMARK WAS ENOUGH TO BRING KALAYAVANA WITH HIS BARBARIAN HORDES TO MATHURA.


AS HE STOOD OUTSIDE THE GATES OF THE CITY, CHALLENGING THE YADAVAS . . .
. . . A MESSENGER RAN UP TO KRISHNA AND BALARAMA.
JARASANDHA IS MARCHING TOWARDS THE CITY. HE SHOULD BE HERE IN A DAY OR TWO.
THIS IS UNFORTUNATE! WHILE WE ARE BUSY FIGHTING THE YAVANA, JARASANDHA WILL KILL OR IMPRISON OUR PEOPLE!
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
WE WILL HAVE TO TRANSPORT THEM TO A SAFE PLACE BEFORE JARASANDHA ARRIVES.
KRISHNA HAD BUT TO THINK ABOUT IT AND THE FORTRESS OF DWARAKA ROSE IN THE WESTERN SEA.



* KRISHNA BEING AN INCARNATION OF LORD VISHNU


LAYING DOWN HIS WEAPONS, KALAYAVANA DISMOUNTED ...
... AND RUSHED FORWARD. BUT JUST AS HE WAS ABOUT TO SEIZE HIM ...
... KRISHNA SUDDENLY TURNED ROUND ...
... AND BEGAN WALKING.
DO NOT RUN AWAY, O YADAVA. IT DOES NOT BECOME A HERO LIKE YOU.
I'LL SOON OVERTAKE YOU, O COWARDLY YADAVA, AND REMAIN UNRIVALLED AMONG MEN.


AND HE BEGAN WALKING FASTER. FINDING KRISHNA ALMOST WITHIN HIS GRASP, HE LURCHED FORWARD . . .
. . . ONLY TO GRAB THE EMPTY AIR.
AFTER WALKING FOR MILES, THEY CAME TO THE MOUNTAIN CAVE OF SAGE MUCHUKUNDA.
AH! NOW YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE ME!
GROPING IN THE DARK, THE YAVANA FOLLOWED KRISHNA.
SHOW YOURSELF, O BRAVE YADAVA!


GRADUALLY THE YAVANA GOT USED TO THE THE DARK. HE SAW A MAN SLEEPING IN A CORNER OF THE CAVE.
AH! THERE! SO THE COWARD IS ALSO A WEAKLING. HE LEADS ME THIS FAR AND THEN FALLS, EXHAUSTED.
MISTAKING THE SLEEPING FIGURE FOR KRISHNA, HE KICKED IT.
COME ON! WAKE UP AND FIGHT!
THE SLEEPING FIGURE SAT UP AND SLOWLY OPENED HIS EYES.
WHO DARES DISTURB THE SLUMBER OF MUCHUKUNDA?
AS HE LOOKED AROUND FOR THE CULPRIT, HIS BURNING GAZE FELL ON KALAYAVANA.
MUCHUKUNDA GAZED LONG AND HARD...
...AND ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF THE YAVANA WAS A HANDFUL OF ASHES.


BALARAMA, MEANWHILE WAS STRUGGLING WITH THE YAVANA'S HORDES. HE HAD ALMOST GIVEN UP HOPE, WHEN —
AH! KRISHNA! KRISHNA HAS RETURNED!
ALAS! THE YADAVA RETURNS ALONE. OUR LORD IS DEAD.
TOGETHER THE TWO BROTHERS SOON KILLED THE ENTIRE ARMY.
AS THEY WERE RETURNING TO DWARAKA WITH THE TREASURES OF THE YAVANAS —
LOOK! JARASANDHA! WITH MORE MEN THAN . . .
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF FIGHTING, KRISHNA. LET'S FLEE TO DWARAKA.


THEY BEGAN TO RUN.
HA! HA! LOOK AT THE BRAVE YADAVA HEROES! LOOK AT THEM FLEE! THIS TIME I WILL NOT RETURN WITHOUT KILLING THEM.
AND JARASANDHA AND HIS ARMY GAVE CHASE.
FOR MILES KRISHNA AND BALARAMA RAN, WITH JARASANDHA AND HIS HUGE ARMY FOLLOWING CLOSE BEHIND. AT LAST—
AH! MOUNT PRAVARSHANA! LET'S CLIMB IT. THEY WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW US UP.
FOR A MOMENT JARASANDHA WAS DUMB WITH FURY TO SEE HIS QUARRY ESCAPE. THEN HE GAVE ORDERS.
SET FIRE TO THE MOUNTAIN! BURN THE VILE YADAVAS ALIVE!
AS THE FLAMES ENVELOPED THE MOUNTAIN, CLOUDING THE ENEMIES' VISION—
QUICK! NOW IS THE CHANCE FOR US TO MAKE GOOD OUR ESCAPE!


THEY BEGAN TO RUN.
HA! HA! LOOK AT THE BRAVE YADAVA HEROES! LOOK AT THEM FLEE! THIS TIME I WILL NOT RETURN WITHOUT KILLING THEM.
AND JARASANDHA AND HIS ARMY GAVE CHASE.
FOR MILES KRISHNA AND BALARAMA RAN, WITH JARA-SANDHA AND HIS HUGE ARMY FOLLOWING CLOSE BEHIND. AT LAST—
AH! MOUNT PRAVARSHANA! LET'S CLIMB IT. THEY WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW US UP.
FOR A MOMENT JARASANDHA WAS DUMB WITH FURY TO SEE HIS QUARRY ESCAPE. THEN HE GAVE ORDERS.
SET FIRE TO THE MOUNTAIN! BURN THE VILE YADAVAS ALIVE!
AS THE FLAMES ENVELOPED THE MOUNTAIN, CLOUDING THE ENEMIES' VISION—
QUICK! NOW IS THE CHANCE FOR US TO MAKE GOOD OUR ESCAPE!


THE TWO BROTHERS TOOK ONE MIGHTY LEAP FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP...
...CROSSED THE ARMIES SURROUNDING THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN...
...LANDED ON THE PLAIN, UNNOTICED BY JARASANDHA'S MEN...
...AND MADE THEIR WAY TO DWARAKA.


MEANWHILE, AS THE FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN BLAZED HIGH—
KAMSA'S DEATH HAS BEEN AVENGED! HIS MURDERER HAS BEEN BURNT ALIVE! LET US RETURN TO MATHURA!
LATER, WHEN JARASANDHA LEARNT THAT THEY WERE NOT DEAD —
ALL THE SAME, I HAVE WON A BATTLE AGAINST THE HATED YADAVA! I HAVE CHASED HIS TRIBE OUT OF MATHURA!
THIS ONE VICTORY MADE JARASANDHA CONCEITED AND AMBITIOUS.
I AM NOW THE MOST POWERFUL KING ON EARTH. I SHALL CAPTURE ALL THE KINGS WHO OWE ALLEGIANCE TO THE YADAVAS AND SACRIFICE THEM.
JARASANDHA DID NOT WASTE ANY TIME. SOON—
AH! ONE MORE. THE NUMBERS SWELL DAILY. MY SACRIFICE SHALL BE UNEQUALLED BY ANY THAT HAS BEEN OR EVER WILL BE PERFORMED.


MEANWHILE, KRISHNA'S COUSINS, THE PANDAVAS, HAD JUST ACQUIRED THE KINGDOM OF INDRAPRASTHA. EVERYONE WAS ANXIOUS FOR YUDHISHTHIRA TO PERFORM THE RAJASUYA SACRIFICE.
DO NOT DELAY. O KING. PERFORM THE SACRIFICE AND BECOME LORD OF THE EARTH.
TO PERFORM THE RAJASUYA IS THE PRIVILEGE OF AN EMPEROR. AND SO JARASANDHA WILL HAVE TO BE DEFEATED. LET ME CONSULT KRISHNA ON THIS.
WHEN KRISHNA CAME AND YUDHISHTHIRA ASKED HIM HIS OPINION —
TO PERFORM THE RAJASUYA YOU WILL HAVE TO KILL JARASANDHA AND RELEASE THE KINGS IMPRISONED BY HIM.
SINCE EVEN YOU WERE ALARMED BY HIS MIGHT, HOW CAN I EVER HOPE TO KILL HIM?



* THE SECOND OF THE FIVE PANDAVAS.


HAVING RECEIVED YUDHISHTHIRA'S CONSENT AND BLESSINGS, KRISHNA, ARJUNA, AND BHEEMA SET OUT FOR MAGADHA, DISGUISED AS BRAHMANS.
THEY REACHED JARASANDHA'S PALACE AT THE HOUR WHEN HE ENTERTAINED PETITIONS.
O KING, WE HAVE COME FROM AFAR FOR A DEFINITE PURPOSE. SO PLEASE SAY YOU WILL GRANT US OUR REQUEST.
JARASANDHA, HOWEVER, WAS NOT WHOLLY TAKEN IN.
THEIR BEARING... THOSE SCARRED FOREARMS... THEY ARE NO BRAHMANS. I THINK I'VE SEEN THEM BEFORE.
THEY HAVE COME DISGUISED, OUT OF FEAR OF ME. SINCE THEY HAVE TAKEN THE TROUBLE TO COME HERE, I WILL GRANT THEM WHATEVER THEY ASK OF ME.


O BRAHMANS, SEEK WHATEVER YOU DESIRE. I AM PREPARED TO GIVE YOU EVERYTHING, EVEN MY HEAD.
THEN GRANT ONE OF US A SINGLE COMBAT WITH YOU.
BUT HOW CAN I, THE KING OF KINGS, LIFT A WEAPON AGAINST A BRAHMAN?
WE ARE NO BRAHMANS. THIS IS BHEEMA, SON OF KUNTI...
... THIS, ARJUNA, HIS YOUNGER BROTHER. AND I AM KRISHNA, THEIR COUSIN AND YOUR SWORN ENEMY.


JARASANDHA LAUGHED CONTEMPTUOUSLY.
FOOLS! IF YOU SEEK COMBAT, I WILL CERTAINLY FIGHT. BUT . . .
. . . NOT WITH YOU, KRISHNA. YOU ARE A COWARD.
AS FOR ARJUNA, HE IS TOO YOUNG. HE IS NO MATCH FOR ME. BHEEMA ALONE IS MY EQUAL. I'LL TAKE HIM ON.
JARASANDHA THREW A HUGE MACE TO BHEEMA . . .

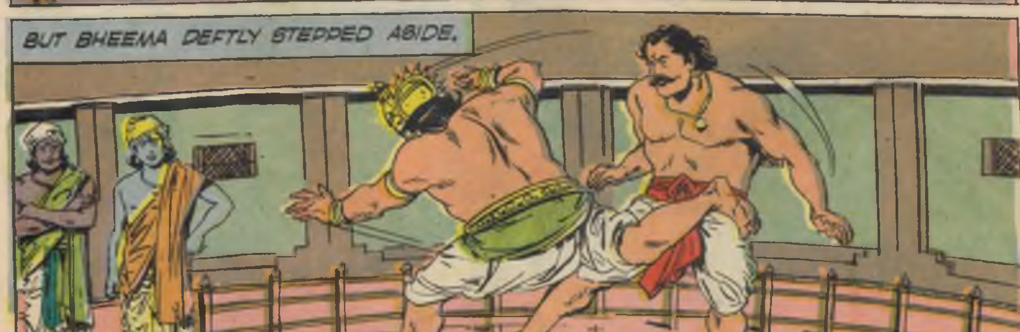

... AND TOOK ANOTHER FOR HIMSELF.
COME, LET US GO OUT OF THE CITY INTO THE ARENA.
ONCE INSIDE THE ARENA, THE TWO WARRIORS BEGAN THEIR FIGHT.
THEY HURLED THEIR MACES AT EACH OTHER...
... TILL THE MACES BROKE.


FULL OF RAGE, THEY RUSHED AT EACH OTHER, HITTING OUT WITH THEIR FISTS OF STEEL. THE BLOWS PRODUCED SOUNDS AS SHARP AS THUNDER-CLAPS.
FOR TWENTY-SEVEN DAYS THEY FOUGHT.
BUT SO WELL-MATCHED WERE THEY, THAT NEITHER SUCCUMBED TO THE OTHER'S BLOWS.

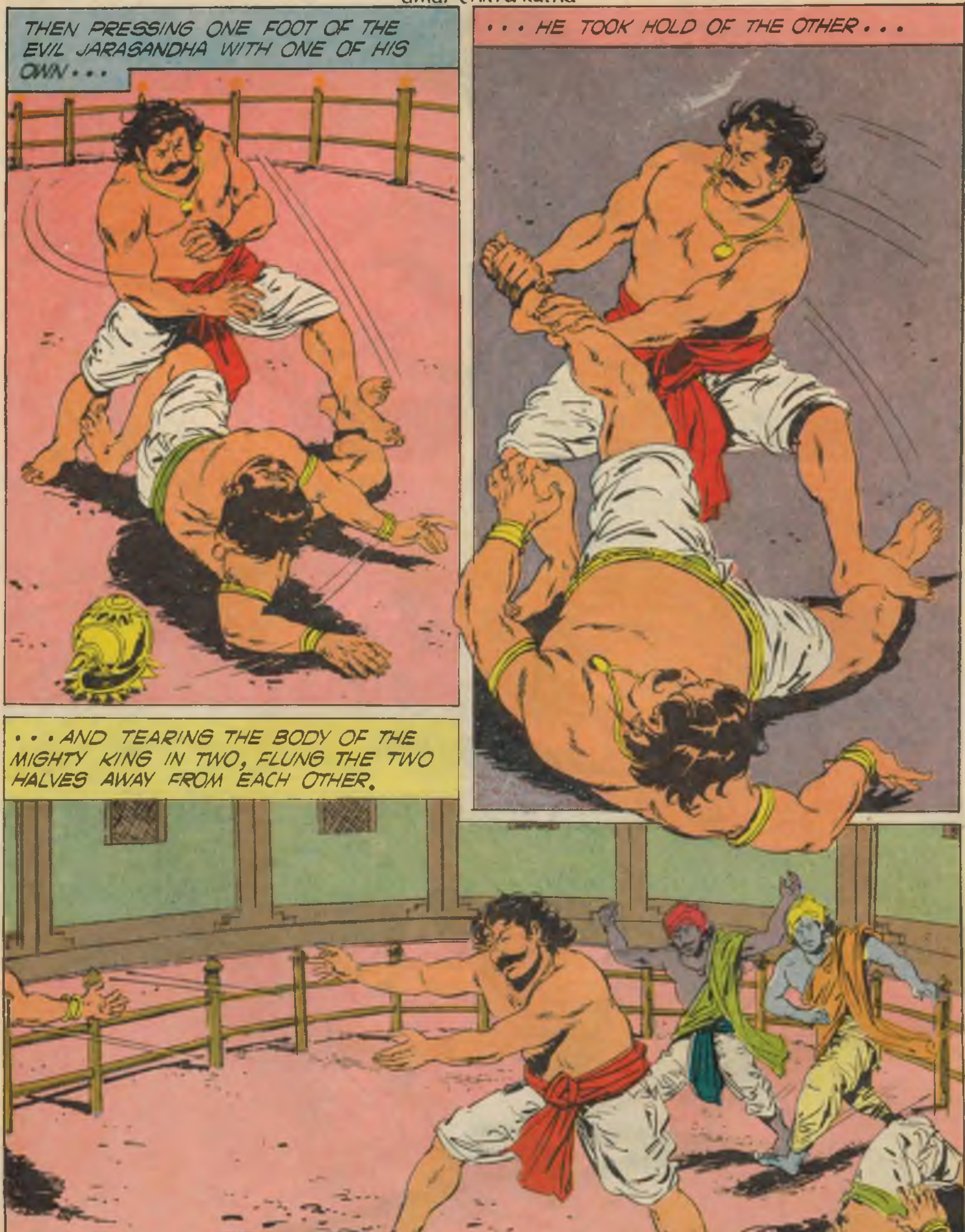

AT LAST, ON THE TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY, AS BHEEMA WAS ABOUT TO ENTER THE ARENA—
KRISHNA, I REMAIN UNDEFEATED, BUT I CANNOT OVERTHROW JARASANDHA IN A DUEL.
KRISHNA, WHO KNEW THE SECRET OF JARASANDHA'S BIRTH, DECIDED THAT IT WAS TIME TO END THE BATTLE.
FOR HAVING ENGAGED JARASANDHA IN COMBAT FOR TWENTY-SEVEN DAYS, BHEEMA WILL ACHIEVE ENOUGH FAME. IT'S TIME I SHOWED HIM HOW TO KILL THE EVIL KING.
WITHOUT SAYING A WORD, KRISHNA PICKED UP A TWIG AND . . .
. . . SPLIT IT IN TWO, LENGTHWAYS.
AH! NOW I HAVE IT.

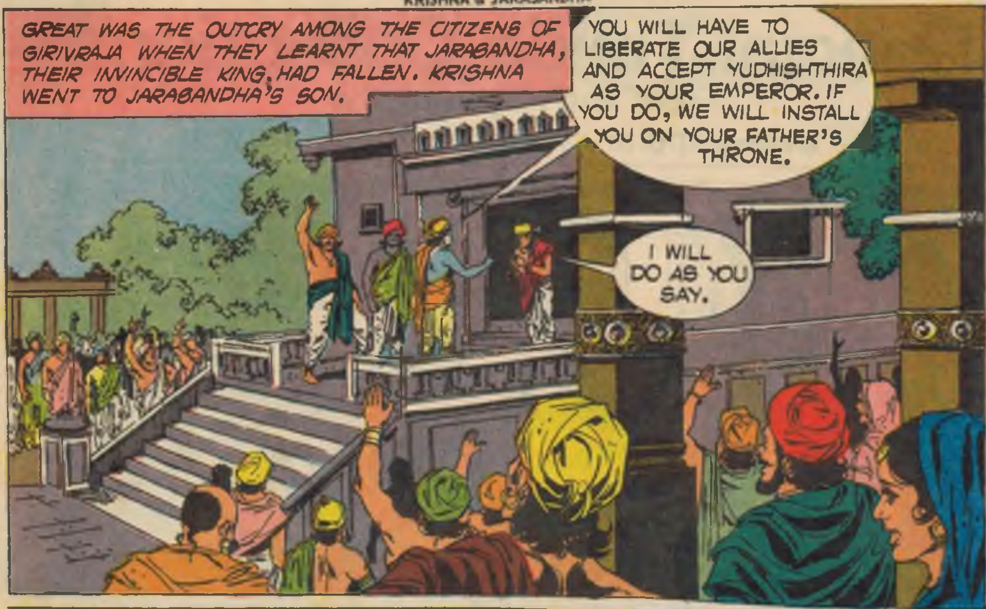

BHEEMA STRODE INTO THE ARENA WITH FRESH CONFIDENCE.
THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY I GET, I MUST SEIZE HIM BY HIS FEET AND THROW HIM TO THE GROUND. THE REST WILL BE EASY!


JARASANDHA RUSHED TOWARDS HIM.


BUT BHEEMA DEFTLY STEPPED ASIDE.


AS JARASANDHA STAGGERED WITH THE MOMENTUM OF HIS CHARGE...
...BHEEMA SEIZED HIM BY THE LEG...
...AND HURLED HIM TO THE GROUND.


THEN PRESSING ONE FOOT OF THE EVIL JARASANDHA WITH ONE OF HIS OWN . . .
. . . HE TOOK HOLD OF THE OTHER . . .
. . . AND TEARING THE BODY OF THE MIGHTY KING IN TWO, FLUNG THE TWO HALVES AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.


GREAT WAS THE OUTCRY AMONG THE CITIZENS OF GIRIVRAJA WHEN THEY LEARNT THAT JARASANDHA, THEIR INVINCIBLE KING, HAD FALLEN. KRISHNA WENT TO JARASANDHA'S SON.
YOU WILL HAVE TO LIBERATE OUR ALLIES AND ACCEPT YUDHISHTHIRA AS YOUR EMPEROR. IF YOU DO, WE WILL INSTALL YOU ON YOUR FATHER'S THRONE.
I WILL DO AS YOU SAY.


AFTER INSTALLING HIM ON THE THRONE, KRISHNA AND THE TWO PANDAVAS RETURNED TO INDRAPRASTHA.
YUDHISHTHIRA, JARASANDHA HAS BEEN KILLED AND THE IMPRISONED KINGS LIBERATED. HIS SON ACCEPTS YOUR SUPREMACY. YOU ARE NOW THE KING OF KINGS. YOU MAY PERFORM THE RAJASUYA SACRIFICE.